695 was in other respects common. They were administered either by the ntyi'i mejo ——esa, ntol, njoo bot, or officer of the ngil or another association—or by a diviner, mvimvi'i, sometimes a specialist in this category of bitom, palavers. The true ordeal had several forms: by a curse uttered over the ancestral grave or the bieti basket; by bitter herbs, alan; by pimento or ants; by boiling water or fire. /72/ Initiations and particularly that for ngil all involved a collective ordeal intended to ward off beyem who might have tried to push their [787] way in. In addition to the ordeal proper, the mvimvi'i could make use of various forms of divining in order to discover presumed culprits. Except for a serious crime, the culprit thus revealed was not forced to undergo an ordeal if he admitted his guilt. Physical ordeals are [671] on the decline; they are considered crimes or delicts in the Penal Code. And ordeal by oath has lost a great deal of its force. Divining remains much in use and is sometimes highly effective (1).

1. An oath may be sworn on a nzo'okak—a little elephant shield containing various medicines, equipped with a strap and worn under the arm. The nzo'okak is not an insignia of authority. Upon the death of its holder it does not pass automatically to the man who becomes head of the family but goes to the one who has a flair for magic. To leap over a nzo'okak laid on the ground means swearing that one has told the truth. The nzo'okak is a guarantee of treaties: after a battle it is placed between the belligerents, who jump over it to vouch for their peaceful intentions. (J. B.)

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[77] 681 Among modern punishments, fines and imprisonment are well recognized by the Pahouin and have a definite intimidating power. On the other hand, the subtleties of setting up a public prosecutor /la constitution de partie civil/ are beyond many peasants, who thus lose the possibility of receiving damages that custom would have given them. Above all, the Napoleonic interpretation of crimes and delicts remains pretty well foreign to Pahouin norms, for example, in judging an insult as a mere transgression even when directed to an